(c) the policy of China regarding Arunachal Pradesh;

(d) whether China considers Arunachal Pradesh as an Indian Territory; and

(e) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI E. AHAMMED): (a) and (b) The resolution of the boundary question between India and China is outstanding. The two sides also have differences in perception of the Line of Actual Control (LAC) in the India-China border areas. Both sides carry out patrolling activity in the India-China border areas. There are instances, from time to time, of transgression of the LAC by the Chinese military personnel.

(c) to (e) China disputes the legality of the McMahon Line dividing Arunachal Pradesh and the Tibet Autonomous Region of China and illegally claims 90,000 square kilometres of Indian territory in the Eastern Sector (Arunachal Pradesh) of the India-China border areas.

Joint Steering Committee Between India and China

3175. SHRI GIREESH KUMAR SANGHI: Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether India and China have agreed to set up a Joint Steering Committee to promote collaborations between the two countries in information technology and other sectors of science and technology;

(b) if so, the details of the discussion held in this regard and outcome thereof; and

(c) the progress achieved, so far?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI E. AHAMMED): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) During the visit of China's State Councillor in charge of science and technology, Mme Chen Zhili, to India in November 2004, both sides agreed to establish an India-China Steering Committee on Scientific and Technological Cooperation, co-chaired by their Ministers for Science and Technology, to review the implementation of existing agreements for bilateral science and technology cooperation and to identify specific areas for future cooperation. This decision was confirmed in the Joint Statement signed

by the two Prime Ministers during the visit of the Chinese Premier to India in April 2005.

(c) A draft Memorandum of Understanding outlining the modalities and scope of functioning of the Steering Committee is under discussion between the Ministries of Science and Technology of the two countries.

Agreements with Bangladesh

†3176. SHRI DARA SINGH CHAUHAN: Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) the matters discussed and agreements signed during his visit to Bangladesh in the first week of August;

(b) whether talks were held with Bangladesh regarding border problem, fencing the border, illegal infiltration, anti India camps operating in Bangladesh, Myanmar-Bangladesh - India gas pipeline, Kolkata-Dhaka bus service etc;

(c) if so, the matters regarding which talks were held and the agreements were signed; and

(d) whether any time-bound programme has been formulated to implement them?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI E. AHAMMED): (a) to (d) During the visit of External Affairs Minister to Bangladesh from 6—8 August 2005, issues pertaining to security, illegal immigration, border fencing, trade and commerce, investments, improving connectivity between the two countries, sharing of water resources, Myanmar-Bangladesh-India gas pipeline and UN reforms were discussed. The External Affairs Minister met the Prime Minister, Finance Minister and Leader of Opposition. He called on the Bangladesh Foreign Minister and held delegation level talks. EAM delivered a letter from Prime Minister to the Bangladesh Prime Minister inviting her to visit India. During the visit, the Foreign Secretary of India and Secretary Ministry of Cultural Affairs of Bangladesh signed the Cultural Exchange program for 2005—08.

† Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.